

The Music of Steve Reich

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Faculty Scholarship Celebration
Indiana University East

March 22, 2019

Introduction

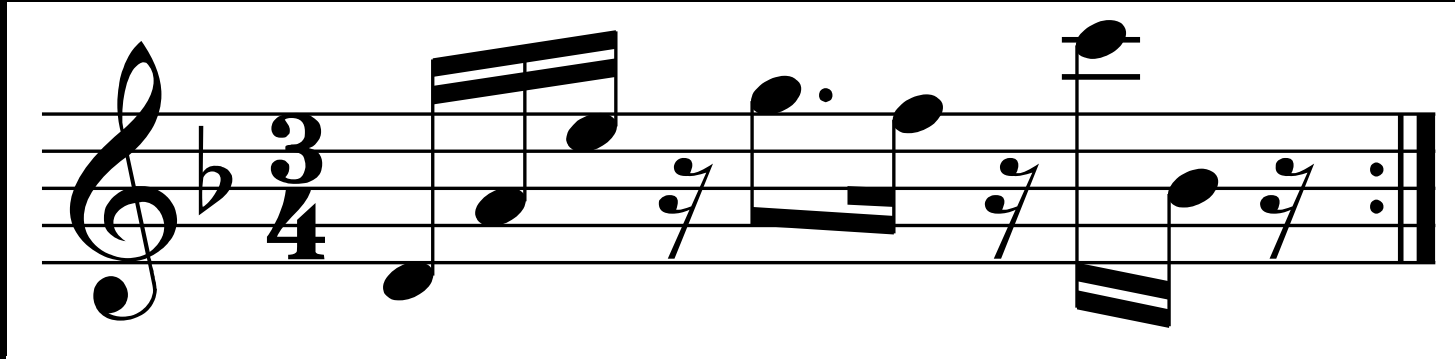
- American classical composer (b. 1936)
- Born and raised in NYC
- Studied philosophy at Cornell University, music at the Juilliard School and Mills College
- Known primarily as a “minimalist” composer
- Music is based on repetitive melodic patterns in *canon* (overlapping, staggered in time) with a strong rhythmic drive
- Has written music for drums and other percussion, piano, string quartet, and orchestra



My research

- Interested in how Reich shapes trajectories through the use of nominally limited musical materials
- How does Reich sustain interest and achieve such variety with these materials?
- What musical elements *do* is just as important as what they *are*
- Developed an interpretive, analytical framework of three principal actions:
 - Building up
 - Staying steady
 - Changing
- Each interacts/reacts to one another
- Allows for a detailed way of observing what the music is doing

Vermont Counterpoint (1982) for flute and tape



Vermont Counterpoint (1982) for flute and tape

Building up:

- Melodic pattern is presented in the first part and repeated
- Pattern is copied in the second part in canon, but built up note by note to completion; repeated
- Pattern is built up and repeated in the third part in the same manner; first layer is completed

Changing:

- Combination of three parts causes certain high notes to “jump out” of the texture, creating a temporary disruption in the meter
- Melodic pattern expands

Vermont Counterpoint (1982) for flute and tape

The image displays a musical score for *Vermont Counterpoint* (1982) for flute and tape. The score is divided into two systems, each with five staves. The first system includes staves for Live Flute, Flute 1, Flute 2, and Flute 3. The second system includes staves for Live Fl., Fl. 1, Fl. 2, and Fl. 3. The score is marked with measure numbers 7 through 12. Measure 7 is marked with a box containing '7' and '3x'. Measure 8 is marked with a box containing '8' and '(1x)'. Measure 9 is marked with a box containing '9'. Measure 10 is marked with a box containing '10'. Measure 11 is marked with a box containing '11'. Measure 12 is marked with a box containing '12'. The score includes various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A vertical dashed line is placed between measures 8 and 9. Text annotations include 'Hearing shifts to $\frac{6}{8}, \frac{12}{16}$ ' above measure 9, 'Heard high Gs' below measure 7, 'upbeat of $\frac{6}{8}$ ' below measure 9, and 'Hearing resets to $\frac{3}{4}$ ' above measure 12. A bracket under measures 10 and 11 is labeled 'mf'. A note at the bottom right states ' $\frac{6}{8}, \frac{12}{16}$ bars do not finish'.

Live Flute

7 3x

8 (1x)

9

Heard high Gs

upbeat of $\frac{6}{8}$

Hearing shifts to $\frac{6}{8}, \frac{12}{16}$

Flute 1

Flute 2

Flute 3

Live Fl.

10

11

12

Hearing resets to $\frac{3}{4}$

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

mf

$\frac{6}{8}, \frac{12}{16}$ bars do not finish

Vermont Counterpoint (1982) for flute and tape

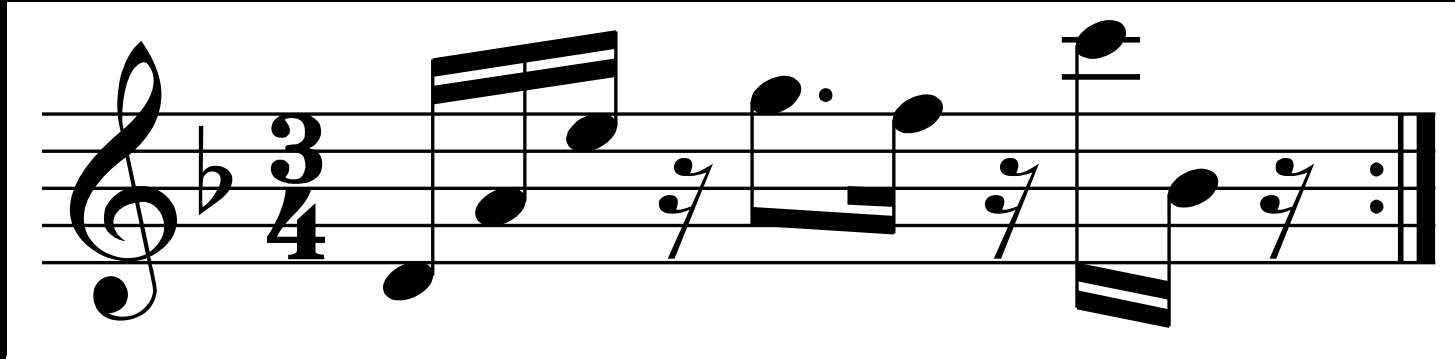
Staying steady:

- Upon the melodic pattern expanding, the corresponding layer keeps repeating while...

Building up:

- Different patterns are built up note by note in the second and third layers simultaneously, but at a faster pace

Vermont Counterpoint (1982) for flute and tape



Happy listening!

Questions? Comments? jrjedlic@iu.edu